

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:CGEN, HA

SUBJECT:CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY

1. FOLLOWING ARE THE TEXTS OF TWO LETTERS RECEIVED BY THE DEPARTMENT. ONE IS FROM WALTER MARSHALL, THE LEADER OF A GROUP OF OPTOMETRISTS WHO VISITED HAITI IN JANUARY, AND THE OTHER FROM CONGRESSMAN ANDREW JACOBS REGARDING THE DIFFICULTIES THE GROUP EXPERIENCED IN CLEARING CUSTOMS IN HAITI.

2. LETTER TO CONGRESSMAN JACOBS FROM MR. MARSHALL. BEGIN TEXT. QUOTE:
OUR GROUP OF 54 RETURNED YESTERDAY FROM HAITI AFTER A MOST SUCCESSFUL AND REWARDING PROJECT. THE GROUP CONSISTED OF 19 OPTOMETRISTS FROM INDIANA, ILLINOIS, MICHIGAN, NEW JERSEY, LOUISIANA, AND MASSACHUSETTS. SIXTEEN OPTOMETRY STUDENTS FROM THE I.U. SCHOOL OF OPTOMETRY AND THE ILLINOIS COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY AND 20 WIVES AND WILLING HELPERS ALSO TWO DENTISTS FROM MICHIGAN WENT. OUR AIR TRAVEL WAS VIA AMBASSADAIR. THEY GRACIOUSLY TRANSPORTED OUR CARGO OF
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MEDICINE, GLASSES, AND EQUIPMENT (COMPLETE OPHTHALMIC EXAMINING ROOM) AT NO COST.

OUR TWO WORK AREAS WERE AT ST. VINCENT'S SCHOOL FOR

CRIPPLED AND BLIND CHILDREN AND DARBONNE, AN AREA SERVICING 100,000 PEOPLE. AT THE TWO AREAS, WE EXAMINED

3,556 PATIENTS AND DISPENSED 2,932 PAIRS OF GLASSES IN FOUR AND ONE HALF DAYS. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME MANY OF THE PATIENTS HAD ANY VISUAL CARE.

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM OF HAITI PROVIDED BUSES FOR OUR TRANSPORTATION TO OUR WORK AREAS. WE ALSO HAD COMPLETE COOPERATION FROM THE MINISTER OF HEALTH.

UPON OUR ARRIVAL AT PORT-AU-PRINCE, JANUARY 2, AT 8 P.M. OUR CARGO WAS SCRUTINIZED BY CUSTOMS. EVERY BOX WAS OPENED. OUR PERSONAL LUGGAGE WE EXPECTED TO BE INSPECTED. A WRITTEN DESCRIPTION OF OUR CARGO WAS PRESENTED TO CUSTOMS BUT THE BOXES WERE OPENED.

AS PER YOUR LETTER, OUR AMBASSADOR WAS TO AID OUR PATH THROUGH CUSTOMS AND OFFER AID TO US DURING OUR STAY. AT NO TIME WERE WE CONTACTED OR AID OFFERED. SHOULD WE HAVE NEEDED AID, WOULD IT HAVE BEEN AVAILABLE? WE DID NOT EXPECT TO BE ENTERTAINED IN ANY WAY BUT A REPRESENTATIVE OF OUR EMBASSY SHOULD HAVE BEEN AT OUR DISPOSAL TO GIVE AID IF NEEDED. THE FACT THAT THE AMBASSADOR'S SON WAS TO BE MARRIED LAST WEEK CANNOT BE CONSIDERED AS AN EXCUSE SHOULD HE DEEM USING IT. I AM SURE HE IS PROVIDED WITH A STAFF TO HANDLE MATTERS FOR HIM.

THIS CERTAINLY IS ANOTHER INDICATION OF BUREAUCRATIC FOUL-UP. I TRUST YOU WILL CONVEY OUR DISPLEASURE TO OUR STATE DEPARTMENT AND THE AMBASSADOR. WHAT GREATER WAY CAN A GROUP OF AMERICANS CONVEY OUR WAY OF LIFE THAN BY SHAR-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ING OUR KNOWLEDGE, TIME AND COST OF OUR TRIP, TO CONVEY TO THE PEOPLE OF HAITI THAT WE ARE NOT "UGLY AMERICANS."

I REALIZE THAT YOU CARRIED MY REQUEST TO THE PROPER AGENCY BUT DUE TO NEGLIGENCE ON THE PART OF THAT AGENCY MY GROUP WAS CAUSED UNDUE PROBLEMS IN CLEARING CUSTOMS IN HAITI. UNQUOTE. END TEXT.

3. LETTER FROM CONGRESSMAN JACOBS OFFICE TO THE DEPARTMENT. BEGIN TEXT. QUOTE:

MR. JACOBS HAS ASKED ME TO FORWARD TO YOU THE ENCLOSED CORRESPONDENCE HE HAS RECEIVED FROM WALTER MARSHALL, O.D. AND THE HONORABLE HEYWARD ISHAM, AMERICAN AMBASSADOR TO HAITI.

MR. JACOBS FORWARDED DR. MARSHALL'S FIRST LETTER OF DECEMBER 1, 1976 TO THE AMBASSADOR ON DECEMBER 6, 1976. AMBASSADOR ISHAM RESPONDED ON DECEMBER 14. MR. JACOBS RECEIVED DR. MARSHALL'S SECOND LETTER OF JANUARY 14,

1977 YESTERDAY.

MR. JACOBS HAS ASKED ME TO DETERMINE WHAT THE DIFFICULTY
WAS THAT CAUSED DR. MARSHALL'S EXPERIENCES. ANY
ASSISTANCE YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO PROVIDE WOULD BE DEEPLY
APPRECIATED. UNQUOTE. END TEXT.

4. DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE A REPORT ON THIS AS SOON
AS POSSIBLE.
VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 31-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3506388
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY
TAGS: CGEN, HA
To: PORT AU PRINCE
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